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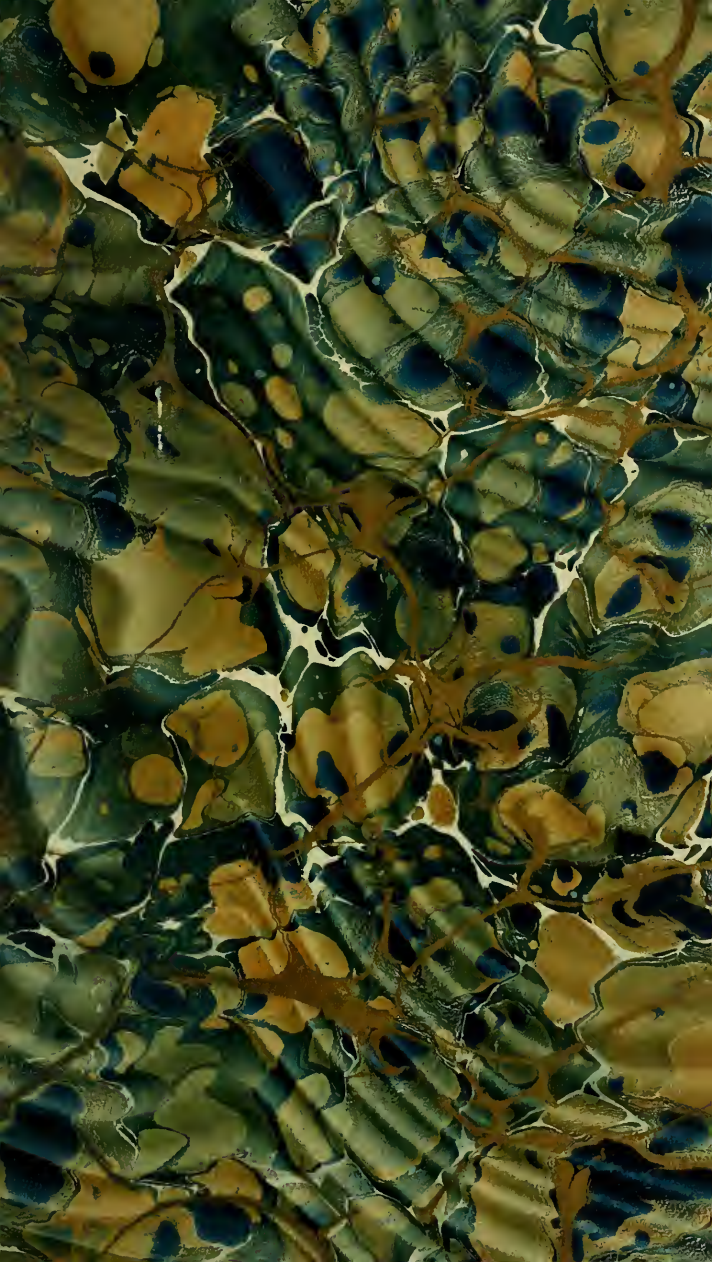


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April, 1897

H.T.

ON OATEN FLUTE



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ON OATEN FLUTE

AND OTHER VERSICLES

BY

WILLIAM TOYNBEE



LONDON

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PRELUDE.

*No craft superlative I ply,
I carol not for cultured ears,
A journeyman of song am I,
Filling the lowliest of spheres ;
With just the trivial tunester's art,
Content to breathe in numbers broken
Themes that frequent the homely heart,
Tho' by the lips but little spoken.*

*Then, souls eclectic, look askance,
Herein, I fear you'll fail to trace
Aught worthy ev'n the passing glance
Of those that scorn the commonplace ;
While others with wing'd footsteps thread
Thought's every labyrinth and by-way,
Its beaten tracks I faltering tread,
A humble singer of the highway.*



THE RELENTING OF WINTER.

WINTER still reigns, tho' with benigner sway,
Less grudgingly day yields its dole of light,
Less swiftly dusk is dispossessed by night,
And tho' no mirth the fields as yet betray,
Nor any verdurous glint invades the grey
Of croft and copse, less sadly on the sight
Their dim lines loom, as tho' some truant sprite
Of distant Spring among them hidden lay.
Assiduously around the sheltered fold
The shepherd hovers, making there retreat
From the wind-harried reaches of the wold
For the lamb-laden ewes, whose strenuous bleat
Promises, ere another moon be old,
To the lorn earth fair life and clamourings sweet.

AN APRIL CAROL.

MARCH is gone with wreck and riot,
 March is gone with blast and bane,
 Woods once more are wrapt in quiet,
 Rills unruffled glide again !
 Lord of havoc and of ruin
 Ever wildly whirling on,
 Sorrow and disaster strewing,
 March, remorseless March, is gone !
 Leaving plain and pasture wan,
 Laying shoot and sapling low,
 Lord of ravage and of woe,
 March, remorseless March, is gone !

April's here, a bee is humming,
 April's here, a primrose peeps ;
 Soon the cuckoo will be coming,
 Bluebells teem in dingle deeps !
 Merle and mavis, lark and linnet
 Quaver forth the message clear,

More enraptured every minute,
 "April, tender April's here!"
Maid of mingled smile and tear,
 Laughter blending with her sighs,
 Weeping out of laughing eyes,
April, tender April's here!

A MAY MADRIGAL.

KINGCUP and cowslip overspread
 The meadows with a maze of gold,
 The crofts are emerald-carpeted,
 The thorns their creamy flakes unfold ;
 Laburnums shimmer, lilacs shower
 Eddies of prodigal perfume,
 A rose is flushing into flower—
 'Tis May, 'tis May, the month of bloom !

The thrush, with blitheness brimming o'er,
 Inaugurates his gala key,
 The blackbird, tentative no more,
 His top-note takes of ecstasy ;
 And where the willows streamward slant,
 As stars steal out and shadows throng,
 The nightingale her first will chant—
 'Tis May, 'tis May, the month of song !

ON THE HILLS: MAY.

BELOW in tranquil lustre lies the weald,
Verdant with croft and slowly heightening corn,
While drowsily upon the breeze is borne
The hum of toilers in an upland field,
By hanger and high underwood concealed,
Who, halting from the labour of the morn,
Cluster beneath a hedge of flowering thorn,
And to the listlessness of noonday yield.
In the clear heights above the hilltop's sward,
Poised o'er a budding brake of eglantine,
The skylark hymns as though he had outsoared
His wings' accustomed scope, and could divine
Elysian islands luminously shored,
And seas that with enchanted azure shine.

A JUNE-DAY DITTY.

My kingdom is the forest free,
 My court the dingle green,
 My palace the wide-spreading tree,
 My wealth the summer sheen ;
 My sceptre is a woodbine spray,
 My throne a mossy seat,
 Where lordly foxgloves homage pay,
 And thyme-flowers kiss my feet.

My jester is the laughing brook,
 My bard the lulling breeze,
 I banquet in a clover-nook
 On nectar showered by bees ;
 My temple is the beechen glade,
 My choir the cooing dove,
 My priestess a smile-dimpled maid,
 My heart's high goddess Love.

TWILIGHT : LATE SUMMER.

THE breeze that since the morn at will has blown,
 In sudden subjugation dies away ;
 There is no movement in the woodbine spray,
 The trembling hazel-leaves have tranquil grown ;
 And ceasing from the murmurous monotone
 Which it has softly breathed throughout the day,
 The churchyard poplar motionlessly grey,
 Broods, mourner-like, above the hillocks lone.
 Up from the homestead languorously swim
 The faint blue smoke-wreaths ; o'er the pensive
 corn
 Dusk gradually spreads her pinions dim,
 Spelling the spirit with a sense forlorn,
 As from beyond the cliff-land's shadowy rim
 The dolorous cadence of the sea is borne.

THE BRIDLE ROAD.

FROM lane to lane it winds along,
An unfrequented way,
Where foxgloves in profusion throng,
And countless rosecups sway ;
Past corn-crowned tracts and heathery sweeps,
Thro' bramble arches spied,
Down-dipping into bosky deeps,
Where humble homesteads hide.

The squirrel springing from the copse
Halts there around to peer,
Upon its sward the rabbit crows,
Without a thought of fear ;
The pigeon from her pine-tree nest
Secure across it wings,
The thrush lutes there his liveliest,
The merle his clearest sings.

And, as day dwindles shadow-fraught,
 An incense there ascends,
More magically sweet than aught
 The garden's fragrance lends ;
As tho' in dusk's enchanted hour,
 With eve's first furtive gloom,
There rose from every raptured flower
 A vesper of perfume.

THE WANE OF SUMMER.

SUMMER is passing. From the banks no more
 Impend the starry sprays of eglantine,
 Sadly the honeysuckle-swathes decline,
 The fragrance of the meadow-sweet is o'er ;
 The skylark that all day was wont to pour
 Thro' the dream-haunted air his strain divine,
 Has vanished, in mute solitude to pine
 For the razed wheat from which he used to soar.
 Summer is passing. Fitfully we hear
 Her knell low-faltered 'neath the faint wind's
 breath ;
 And yet so beauteous doth her guise appear,
 In such a radiant swoon she slumbereth,
 That Autumn, from her ambush hovering near,
 Is half in doubt if it indeed be death.

A SUMMER SUNRISE.

THE stars have stolen to repose,
 The wind's tranced whisper ebbs away,
 In the wan east a rift of rose
 Betokens dawn's returning sway.
 A hallowed hush pervades the air,
 As tho' to greet the ascendant sun,
 From every leaf there sped a prayer,
 From every flower an orison.

Solemnly night's last vestige pales,
 The gates of morn are open rolled,
 Azure above the rose prevails,
 Above the azure fretted gold.
 Then upward, brooking earth no more,
 Joy's minstrel thro' the ether swims,
 And, hailing dawn the conqueror,
 Chant after chant of victory hymns.

AUTUMN. 1888.

SPRING, long awaited, blossomed but to fleet,
For hardly had she from their moaning won
The winds to melody, and coaxed the sun
To tinge with emerald the trembling wheat,
When Summer, envious of a spell so sweet,
And all the sudden wonder it had done,
Dissolved the dream of joy at last begun,
Then stole not e'er again from her retreat.
But ah ! the solace wrought by Autumn's smile
For Summer's ban of tearfulness and blight !
Almost it seemed as tho' from her exile
Spring, in atonement for too swift a flight,
Had ventured back on earth, to make awhile
A golden resurrection of delight.

CORN CARRYING.

WITH restless whirr of reaping
The fields no more resound ;
The marshalled sheaves are sleeping
With mellow sunshine crowned ;
And some the pitchfork bearing,
Some mounted on the wain,
The farm-folk forth are faring
To gather in the grain.

With tassels gaily nodding
Above each rough-hewn head,
Around the stubble plodding
The patient teamsters tread ;
Now, at the collar straining,
As slow the waggon heaves,
Now, motionless remaining,
For fresh relays of sheaves.

Then, as day nears its ending,
And the last load they pile,
The gleaner-folk, slow-wending,
Along the stem-tracks file ;
Youth garrulously trooping,
On toil but half intent ;
Old age in silence grouping,
Laboriously bent.

At length the sun, long fading,
Sinks regally to rest,
His death-pageant pervading
The wide realms of the west.
Eve's scent floats from the clover,
Eve's star shines o'er the hill ;
The stress of day is over,
And all the weald is still.

A FAIR NOVEMBER.

“AH, would,” I sighed, “that Winter might not
wake ;

Winter that compasses to all things grief,
Wreck to the blossom, ruin to the leaf,
Silence to every songster of the brake ;
That I might never hear the hoarse wind make
O'er wold and upland, barren of the sheaf,
Lament for Autumn's pageant all too brief,
Nor on the rill behold the foam's weird flake !”—
Then Winter came, but with such placid mien,
Such likeness to the lenity of Spring,
So softly did the sere hues intervene,
So gradually the redbreast cease to sing,
That less he seemed the all-dreaded lord of teen
Than slumber's angel, tired earth visiting.

AN EARLY WINTER.

DAY slowly shudders out with sullen light ;
 Along the pleasance-path a dank air blows,
 Fretting the ruined remnant of a rose,
That looms from its stark tendril, wanly white.
Ravage of blast, and balefulness of blight
 Border and slope and alley-sward disclose ;
 A spectral charnel-place the garden grows,
Grey Golgotha that erst was Eden bright.—
Dusk wanes and, vapour-veiled, the moon awakes,
 Haunting with haggard glint the reaches drear ;
Then bodefully a gust the stillness breaks,
 As, grasping with gaunt hand his hoar-gemmed
 spear,
Wolf-hearted Winter stealthy ingress makes,
 To filch the diadem from Autumn's bier.

TO HESPERUS.

(From Bion.)

DEAR Hesperus, fair lamp of Aphrodite,
Dear Hesperus, pure jewel of the night,
Amid the multitude of stars as mighty
As thou art pale beside Selene's light,
Hail, friend, and to the shepherd's merry-making
Illume my path with thy benignant beam,
For her new course the moon to-day is taking,
And so the sooner has withdrawn her gleam.
Think not I would maraud beneath night's cover,
Or maltreat those that on their lone way rove ;
Nay, no molester am I, but a lover,
And surely thou wilt lend thy sheen to love !

A RURAL EPICUREAN.

(From Moschus.)

WHEN the wind softly sways the azure sea
My languid spirit kindles at the sight,
And then the land no more is a delight,
Only the mighty main seems fair to me.
But when the waters in their wrath grow hoar,
And the long rollers rage in curling foam,
I turn again towards my wooded home,
And list to look upon the sea no more.
Oh, sweet the land, and sweet the forest dark,
Whose pines make song, whate'er the wild wind's
 strife,
And dire indeed must be the fisher's life,
Who toils upon the deep, his home a bark,
Precarious his prey. But, ah, for me
Repose beneath the full leaves of the plane,
Where the adjacent rivulet's refrain,
Soothes with its even-voiced serenity.

VARIOUS.

TO CYNTHIA.

(On Her Sixteenth Birthday.)

AH, couldst thou only thus for ever stay !
 Just woo'd by sunshine, just caressed by shower,
 No more a floweret, yet not quite a flower,
 Too old for April, yet too young for May !
 Terrestrial, but untinged with earth's gross clay,
 Uranian, but undazzled by Heaven's dower ;
 Empress, tho' all unconscious of thy power,
 Siren, tho' all unwitting of thy sway !
 Oh, sweeter thus to view thee, and depart
 Eternally from that charmed sphere of thine,
 Than tarrying, find thee changed from what thou
 art,
 A star more luminous, but less divine,
 Than watch unclosethe cloister of thy heart,
 And Innocency stealing from the shrine.

IMOGEN.

HER luminous face, her delicate form,
Her hair's fine-threaded gold,
Her colouring, jessamine-white, rose-warm,
Her mouth's sweet mobile mould,
The dainty turn of her stem-like throat,
Her head augustly set,
A vestal Lamballe might well denote,
Or virginal Antoinette.

She glides thro' life with her girlish guise,
As she would thro' the vernal meads,
Surveying the flowers with intent, pure eyes,
And ignoring the noxious weeds.
Her mind is a volumè treasure-stored,
Upon whose leaves of light
The sunbeams their waking thoughts record,
And the stars their reveries write.

ON CHANTREY'S EFFIGY OF THE
HONOURABLE MRS. STANHOPE AND
INFANT CHILD, IN CHEVENING
CHURCH, KENT.

UPON them a consummate slumber lies,
Unfathomable, infinite repose,
Like the sublime tranquillity that glows
In the expiring sheen of sunset skies.
A newly-unfurled flower the mother's guise,
The babe's a floweret that engrafted blows,
A rose-bud interblended with a rose,
One with its life, and dying when it dies.
Death wrested them, but was constrained to stay
His withering touch, to transient pity woo'd
By lorn Love's anguishment ; and as they lay
Twined on the bier, in beauty unsubdued,
Fond Genius, seizing the sepulchral clay,
Divinely moulded their similitude.

BENEDICTA.

“OH where,” she asked, “does the butterfly,
That flits in the sunshine, dwell?
And is it a song, or is it a sigh
That floats from the ringdove’s dell?”

And what do the light winds say as they roam
With their murmur so soft and low?
And the foxglove, is it the fairies’ home,
As it used to be long ago?

And do they steal out on a starry night,
When nobody sees or hears?
And weep to depart with the dawn’s first light?
And the dewdrops, are they their tears?

And what is the tale that the whispering wheat
Keeps telling the passers-by?
And why does the rose always smell most sweet
Just before it is going to die?”—

And so, with her young soul ever astir,
The bright summer long she basked,
Till the Father Omniscent sent for her,
And answered her all she asked.

A DEATH-BED.

THROUGH the dark valley thou wilt pass to-night.
To the drear labyrinth of troubled years,
The fruitless sighs, the unavailing tears,
At last the end grows slowly into sight.
Death doth but wait for day's retreating light,
For that spelled hour when eve's first beacon peers,
And vespers gently fall on jaded ears,
To give thy soul the signal for its flight.
Then, with a brow unclouded as of old,
A heart no longer scathed by sorrow's scars,
Out of life's mists and vapours manifold,
Into that clime no shadow ever mars,
Thou wilt emerge, and rapt communion hold
With the belov'd, long gathered to the stars.

MISERRIMA.

A WEARILY-WAN little face,
 A feeble, forlorn little smile,
 Poor faltering feet
 That must pace their beat
 For many and many a mile—
 A star stealing out in the dusk,
 A lamp that luridly flares ;
 In the wide city's whirl
 Just a nameless girl—
 Nobody cares !

A desolate, dearth-stricken room,
 A pillow pushed up to the wall,
 A flicker that shows
 A face in repose,
 Silence, and that is all ;
 Save just on the woe-begone cheek
 That look which such raptness wears,
 That light on the brow—
 Ah, who shall say now,
 “Nobody cares” ?

THE TEMPLE EMBANKMENT—LATE
NIGHT.

CHIMES multitudinous tell midnight's hour ;
 Now silvery-faint, now solemnly profound,
 With slow reverberation they resound
 From the vast throng of steeple, dome, and tower.
 The stars no longer few and fitful cower,
 But in resplendent galaxy abound,
 Sparkling pellucid 'gainst a sapphire ground,
 Condign regalia of night's vestal power.
 With mounting flood the majestic river flows,
 Past swarthy banks freed from the fret and din
 Of craft and crane, a tide of tranced repose,
 Save for some spot where misery seeks to win
 Furtive emancipation from its throes,
 Or shame dissolves its vassaldom to sin.

ON AN ANNIVERSARY.

THY little face was May to me,
 Thy little voice as vernal song,
 And like the brooklet's revelry
 Thy tiny footsteps glanced along ;
 So pure the radiance of thine eyes,
 Such halcyon rapture gemmed their rays,
 That were there Spring in Paradise,
 'Twas surely imaged in thy gaze !

God gave thee, then repented Him ;
 Haply when thou hadst winged afar,
 Less gladly sang the Cherubim,
 Less brightly shone the Morning Star ;
 For hardly hadst thou hither sped,
 To earth thy first effulgence given,
 When He reclaiming arms outspread,
 And cradled thee again in Heaven.

A FAREWELL.

FAREWELL, 'tis not for me to say
Thy heart has been untrue ;
I've only found the sky was grey
When I believed it blue.

Farewell, by me 'twill ne'er be said
Thy smile came but to fleet ;
I've only found my rose was dead
When I believed it sweet.

Farewell, I claim from thee no tear,
No sigh from thee would wring ;
I've only found 'twas Winter drear
When I believed it Spring.

IN REVERIE'S HOUR.

(For Music.)

As twilight gathers o'er me
Day's turmoil I forget ;
The world fades out before me
With all its fume and fret ;
As forth the stars come stealing,
And faint the fire-gleams grow,
Fond reverie wakes, revealing
The Loved of long ago.

No mystic incantation
To summon them I need,
The heart's mute invocation
They answer as I plead ;
Out of the shadows gliding
They round me gently smile,
Like children who from hiding
Have wandered back awhile.

As twilight gathers o'er me,
And faint the fire-gleams grow,
I conjure up before me
The Loved of long ago ;
Free range to reverie giving,
I view the Past outspread,
Till all the dead seem living
And all the living dead !

SONG OF THE SEA FAIRIES.

IN the far-away meadows the maidens sing
Of the earth in its garb of green,
And their hearts are as blithe at the burst of Spring
As tho' Winter never had been.
They twine the daisies, they wreath the may,
And laugh with the linnet's mirth,
Yet Spring's but a dawn, and Summer a day,
On the breast of the changeful earth.

To the far-away meadows we never roam,
Our realm is the boundless blue,
Our flowers are the coral, our wreaths the foam
Of an ever unfading hue.
They reckon not the heat of the fiercest sun,
The iciest blast they brave ;
Spring, Summer, and Autumn and Winter are one
In our home 'neath the dancing wave !

THE TRIUMPH OF TEARS.

(For Music.)

To Love I thought to tender
My lyre's most tuneful strain,
The brightest it could render
I plied and plied again.
The wheat in mirth was springing,
The sky shone clear above,
But blithe as was my singing
It never brought me Love!

I changed my song to weeping,
I cast my-lyre away,
Its chords no longer sweeping
To carols light and gay.
The fields in dearth were pining,
The sun had paled above,
But lo, my tears were shining,
For they had brought me Love!

AN ADAGIO.

AH me, ah me, to sit in the shining world,
And know that for us there's a blight in each bloom
 unfurled,
To list to the notes of the Spring-birds rippling by,
And know that for us in every song is a sigh,
 Ah me, ah me.

Ah me, ah me, to walk in the fields, and find
At every step a shadow stealing behind,
When all the green of the earth is smiling gay,
The wraith of a love long hushed and hidden away,
 Ah me, ah me.

LETHE.

THEY tell of a dark-flowing river,
On whose banks there is never a gleam ;
Ah, the young and the gay, how they shiver
To think of that stream !

But tho' of its shadow-swept waters
The young and the gay will not drink,
Sorrow beckons her pale sons and daughters
To kneel at its brink.

There Pain stays the shaft in his quiver,
There Grief steals away, and Regret ;
Yes, it needs but one sip of that river
To sleep and forget !

AN APRIL REGRET.

IF Spring must return with its flush of flowers,
Its songs, its sighs, its luminous skies,
Its glimmer of green in numberless bowers,
Its day that ever more slowly dies,
Spring with its sunshine, Spring with its showers,
Its linnet waking, its lark a-wing,
Oh, for some land where the snow ever lies,
For Spring without Love is no longer Spring,
And Love it can never again be ours,
No, never again be ours.

EROTION.

(*Martial. Epig., Book V. 38.*)

FAR fairer did my darling seem
Than ev'n the full-plumed swan ;
No lamb beside Tarentum's stream
Matched my Erotion !

More exquisite she was to me
Than the most lustrous pearl
Of Lucrine lake or Persian sea,
My peerless little girl !

The lily in its purest prime,
The snow's unsullied fall,
The ivories of Orient clime,
Whiter was she than all !

Her hair surpassed the coils that crown
The maidens of the Rhine,
The dormouse with its golden down,
Iberia's fleeces fine.

Sweet was her breath as Paestan bowers
 As amber all a-glow,
 Or honey freshly hived from flowers
 That on Hymettus blow.

The squirrel by her side had been
 Bereft of all its grace,
 The peacock paltry 'mid its sheen,
 The Phoenix commonplace !

* * * * *

Scarce cold upon the new-made pyre
 My pretty darling lies ;
 The Fates were wrought with envious ire
 To rob me of my prize ;

And ere six years she'd counted quite,
 In her sixth winter-tide,
 My pet, my plaything, my delight,
 My own Erotion died !

Yet Paetus, who himself displays
 The wildest of despair,

(He's pummelled now his chest for days,
And pulled out half his hair !)

Paetus is pleased to rally me
On being a little sad—
“What ! snivelling for a slave !” sneers he,
“You surely must be mad !

“Why *I* have lost a *wife*, endowed
With all the world could give,
Riches, position, lineage proud,
Yet *I* contrive to live !”

Our friend with courage truly rare
Against misfortune strives ;
He finds himself a millionaire,
Yet, strange to say, survives !

“'TIS ENOUGH!”

I LOVE thee ; Life's but toil, they say,
Over a desert rough,
A joyless, lightless, flowerless way ;
I love thee, 'tis enough !

I love thee ; Death bestows, they say,
No balm for Life's rebuff,
Wan night instead of weary day ;
I love thee, 'tis enough !

AT A GRAVE-SIDE.

THEY say thou art in Heaven, that Heaven is fair,
 And neither toil nor pain can enter there,
 Nor bitter tears be any longer shed.
 It may be so, I only know
 That thou art dead.

'They say thou art in Heaven, and bending down,
 White-robed, with on thy brow a radiant crown,
 Biddest me softly to be comforted.
 It may be so, I only know
 That thou art dead.

They say that thou art happy, that thou canst be
 Happy, my heart's one stay, afar from me !
 Down to thy grave's deep grass I bow my head.
 It may be so, I only know
 That thou art dead.

TO ONE LONG-MOURNED.

I DREAM of thee, not as the white-wing'd are
That roam the cloudless isles ;
Not gazing down upon me from afar
Where only radiance smiles ;
But as on this drear earth thou wert to me,
I dream of thee.

I dream of thee, my singer by the way
Where else there was no song ;
My comforter, that madest darkness day,
Even my weakness strong ;
Yes, as in this lone world thou wert to me,
I dream of thee.

ISHMAEL.

THE fields are all sweet with hay,
The brakes are all blithe with song,
On the hedges rose garlands sway,
Convolvulus clusters throng,
As shoeless and tattered, and grimy, and grey,
He shuffles along.

A skylark sings high above,
A thrush from yon hanging bough,
Far away in the wood a dove,
But he passes with scowling brow.
Their melodies once he was wont to love,
He hates them now.

Hates all ; save the sheltering night,
When under a bank he creeps,
And squalor is out of sight,
And hunger its distance keeps,
And unmocked by the birds and the meadows
bright,
His misery sleeps.

IN FABLELAND.

(*With Three Old Favourites.*)

DRAW the curtain, close the shutter,
 Range the screen across the door,
 Lulling to a languid mutter
 All the traffic's rush and roar ;
 As the drowsy flame grows dimmer,
 Curling round the log's charred brand,
 Let us glide amid its glimmer
 Into far-off Fableland.

* * * * *

Silently the great enchanter
 Rises up before us there ;
 Time, the spoiler, the supplanter,
 Has not touched one silvery hair ;
 Still with beaming smile unbanished,
 Still with tear but half concealed,
 As of old, on nights long vanished,
 He his spell begins to wield.

From the bell a fairy tinkle,
 From the wand a magic wave,
 And with eyes that starlike twinkle
 Dazzling Trix greets Esmond grave ;
 While intent upon his pleading
 So remorselessly withstood,
 With a look half-interceding
 Sighs sweet Rachel Castlewood !

Next, ah, what a wondrous medley
 Opens out before our view !
 Purse-proud Osborne, pauper Sedley ;
 Trusty Dobbin, George untrue ;
 Emmy winning, Becky wiling ;
 Craftless Rawdon, cunning Steyne—
 Loving, hating, sobbing, smiling !
 Was there ever such a scene ?

Then the wand a moment falters
 As it circles through the air ;
 Round us something weirdly alters,
 What we cannot tell, nor where ;
 O'er our eyes a mist comes stealing,
 Pensive silence reigns supreme,

Till a vesper-bell's faint pealing
 Falls like music in a dream.

Gradually it ceases sounding—
 Whose those suppliant hands upborne?
 Whose that face with peace abounding,
 Yet so wan, so sorrow-worn?
 Feebly seems the breath to flutter,
 Quaveringly the lips exclaim—
 "Adsum!" that is all they utter;
 He has answered to his name!

* * * * *

Death's dark torrent, onward rushing
 Ever sweeps some track away,
 Ever some lov'd voice is hushing,
 In our ears but yesterday.
 'Mid the dusk of life's December
 On its Spring our sad thoughts fall,
 Till we pine to not remember,
 Till we pray to not recall!

Then, like troubled children yearning
 For some charm their grief to quell,

Do we find our hearts returning
To the great enchanter's spell ;
To the solace of those pages
That no change can ever sear,
Where each tender smile assuages
And there's balm in every tear.

THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

(*From Heine.*)

I DREAMED of a king's daughter,
Wet was her cheek and cold,
And she sat beneath the lindens green,
And my heart in thrall did hold.

“Thy father's throne I would not,
Nor his sceptre, tho' gold it be,
I would not his flashing diadem ;
Thou sweet one, I would but thee !”

“It may not be,” she whispered,
“In the grave they have laid me low,
And only at night I come to thee,
Because I love thee so.”

A ST. JAMES'S CAROL.

(For a Spinet Accompaniment.)

COULD Time but ripple backward and bear me on
its flow,

My bourne would be St. James's a century ago,
The age ere bow and curtesy as yet had taken wing,
The age of *verve* and sparkle when George the
Third was king!

When manners were politer,
And wit and mirth beamed brighter,
The debonair St. James's when George the Third
was king!

I'd dally with his lordship in flowered silk arrayed,
I'd languish to my lady resplendent in brocade,
Frequent the Mall each morning, each afternoon
the Ring,
For life was all diversion when George the Third
was king!

A round of sport and pleasure,
 Of laughter and of leisure,
 Ay, life was all diversion when George the Third
 was king!

Then as the stars out-twinkled I'd step into my
 chair,
 And in the train of Beauty to Ranelagh repair,
 For Phyllis turn fine phrases, for Chloë couplets
 string,
 As was the courtly custom when George the Third
 was king!

Now homage softly sighing,
 Now archly versifying,
 As was the courtly custom when George the Third
 was king!

In the small hours home-faring, from club to club
 I'd flit,
 Here scent the latest scandal, there sip the latest
 wit,
 At lansquenet or faro my guineas gaily fling,
 For gallants all were gamesters when George the
 Third was king!

Now wagers madly making,
 Now fortunes wildly staking,
 For gallants all were gamesters when George the
 Third was king !

And as the dice rings louder, the claret flows more
 free,
 Let some wild spark too pertly press home the
 repartee,
 How nimbly from its ambush the arbiter would
 spring,
 That settled all dissensions when George the Third
 was king !

If Rank and Fashion wrangled
 The blades that by them dangled
 Soon settled all dissensions when George the Third
 was king !

* * * * *

Dear age of glee and glitter, of *persiflage* and play,
 Your "mode" is now deemed musty, your "ton"
 has had its day ;
 New fashions and new phases the years revolving
 bring,

But ah, for me St. James's when George the Third
was king!

When manners were politer,

And wit and mirth beamed brighter,

The debonair St. James's when George the Third
was king!

VAUXHALL. 1797.

WHEN wearied with Brooks's,
 When White's windows pall,
 Sure, the snuggest of nooks is
 A box at Vauxhall !

Tho' the House and the Lobby
 At times may enthrall,
 If you ask me my hobby,
 I' faith, 'tis Vauxhall ;

Voting straight is a duty
 One soon would find gall,
 If it weren't for the beauty
 That throngs to Vauxhall !

Now 'tis proud Lady Betty
 With dukes at her call,
 Now humbler Miss Letty
 Who reigns at Vauxhall !

Now an eye archly beaming,
A waist wondrous small,
Or laugh music-teeming
That witches Vauxhall !

Tho' modish Mayfair is
With rout and with ball,
No revelry there is
Like that of Vauxhall !

Oh, the frolic and laughter
And life of it all !
Paris e'en is dull after
A spell of Vauxhall !

Then tho' dynasties tumble,
And ministers fall,
May one kingdom ne'er crumble,
Gay, giddy Vauxhall !

CATCH.

(For a Child's Song-book.)

WHY are you singing so soon, Robin?

Autumn as yet is unborn,

The banks and the bowers

Still glimmer with flowers,

And they haven't yet carried the corn, Robin,

They haven't yet carried the corn.

What is the theme of the song, Robin,

You quaver each calm afternoon,

When the linnets all hush,

And even the thrush

Restrains her impetuous tune, Robin,

Restrains her impetuous tune?

Does it bode of the winter to be, Robin,

When the green from your bough will have fled,

And all will be drear,
And solemn and sere,
Save your gay little waistcoat of red, Robin,
Save your gay little waistcoat of red?

Farewell, I must off to the town, Robin,
Where trillers like you never throng,
And no song is e'er heard
Save the sparrow's, pert bird,
If his can be reckoned a song, Robin,
If his can be reckoned a song.

Farewell, but I'm coming again, Robin,
When winter-winds whistle and blow,
And for crumbs at the door
With bright eyes you implore ;
Farewell, till we meet in the snow, Robin,
Farewell, till we meet in the snow !

“GOING HOME.”

(*For Music.*)

Going home—the blithe birds singing
 Soft from every bank and spray,
 Faint winds to the uplands winging
 Incense from the new-mown hay ;
 O'er her brow the year's first roses,
 In her heart Love's first delight ;
 Going home as sunset closes—
 Good-night, pretty one, good-night !

Going home—the dark clouds frowning,
 Naught around but ceaseless din,
 Even Pity's accents drowning
 In the world of tears and sin ;
 On her brow no longer gladness,
 In her heart Care's hopeless blight ;
 Going home to shade and sadness—
 Good-night, weary one, good-night !

Going home—the stars awaking,
Calm above the city's roar,
Tidings unto worn hearts breaking,
Of repose for evermore ;
On her brow retreating sorrow,
In her heart returning light ;
Going home till Joy's good-morrow—
Good-night, happy one, good-night !

A SUNDAY-NIGHT REMINISCENCE.

EVER so many years ago, when folk were not so
wise,
And faces were more fraught with smiles, and hearts
heaved fewer sighs,
There lived a good old Clerk, my dear, unseeking
for renown,
Ever so many miles away from noisy London town.

His shoulders had a tell-tale stoop, his cheeks were
shrunk and lean,
His coat, a black when it was new, had aged into a
green,
The buckles on his shoes, my dear, that once for
silver shone,
Grew more and more like lead to look as Time
went stealing on.

But tho' his form with years was bowed, his brow
 with furrows seamed,
 And tho' his clothes to threads were worn, his smile
 upon you beamed
 So tenderly benign, my dear, to everyone it told
 He had a heart, at any rate, that never could grow
 old !

His stipend wasn't over much, as stipends count
 to-day,
 But little as his utmost was, he gave it all away,
 A miserable dole, my dear, 'twould now, no doubt,
 be found,
 Yet every penny-piece from him seemed worth
 another's pound.

His sermons were not talented, you would have
 called them tame,
 "Be good, be just, have charity," each week he
 taught the same ;
 No doctrine, no research, my dear, that I must
 needs allow,
 And yet they always reached the heart ; how many
 do so now ?

Ah, well, the world has changed since then, is
changing every day,
Each moment that it spins around it grows more
wise, they say ;
And yet, I sometimes think, my dear, (no doubt, a
dotard's whim,)
'Twould be, perhaps, a better world if there were
more like him !

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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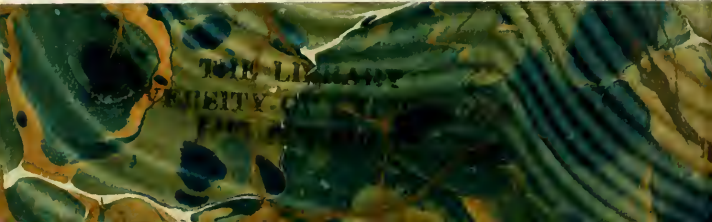
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